



Marsiling Secondary School

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Dear Fellow Parents

I am Jaliah, the Chairman of the MSL Parents in Education (MSL PiE), Marsiling Secondary School's parent-support group.

I have a daughter in Sec 4 whose national exams are just around the corner. I also have a daughter in Sec 3 and she will be sitting for the End-of-Year Examinations from this week on. I am sure, as parents, we all feel the same concerns about supporting our children through this stressful period.

I came across an exam survival guide on the internet which had some very practical tips for us, parents, as well as our children. As we are all in the same boat, I thought I might share some of these tips with all of you.

Keep Talking to our Children

Parent-child communication is essential to help children prepare for their exams. We parents can do this using the following ways.

- Encourage without pressurizing. Nagging causes rows.
- Do not compare a child's efforts to those of an older sibling or classmates.
- Adolescents may be suffering other stresses besides exam worries. Make sure they have someone to talk to.
- Listen to complaints about subjects or teachers. Make sure the school is aware of any problems.
- Remind older siblings what it is like to do exams and encourage them to offer support. Keep younger brothers and sisters occupied at revision time.

Back to Basics for our Teenagers

- Our children should find a comfortable, well-lit place to work. Get rid of clutter and use files and plastic wallets to organize information.
- It is important to get plenty of sleep, eat properly, avoid junk food and keep active. This will help beat stress and keep concentration at its peak.
- Drink plenty of water to keep the brain hydrated. Take a bottle into the exam.

Feed our Children's Minds

Healthy, regular meals are also important for children to concentrate on their studies. Here are some healthy eating ideas that parents can use.

- Stress can make the immune system more susceptible to infections. Eating a healthy balanced diet helps ward off coughs and colds.
- Regular snacks keep blood sugar level levels up and reduce mood swings. Bananas, dried fruits and nuts are great as revision or pre-exam snacks.
- Give our children oily fish, which contain the essential omega-3 fatty acids for a healthy brain and nervous system, or an omega-3 supplement to boost concentration.
- Avoid junk food, it makes the body sluggish. Replace chips with whole meal pasta and rice and serve lean meats and fresh fish.
- Vitamins and minerals help to maintain proper brain function and eating five portions of fruit and vegetable a day keeps the brain healthy. Keep a full fruit bowl and put salad in packed lunches.
- Avoid fizzy drinks, especially before bed. Serve milk or chamomile tea at night to help our children relax and sleep. Tiredness causes loss of concentration.

Help Manage Stress

- Help plan a revision timetable, with relaxation time built in.
- Do not force our children to go out if they feel they do not have enough time, it will just add to their burden.
- Look out for headaches, nausea, sleeplessness, a noticeable change in eating habits and a bad temper, which could mean stress is out of control.

Positive Thinking for our Teenagers

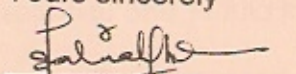
- Our teenage child should avoid friends who are not motivated. Stick with the positive ones who encourage and inspire.
- On the exam day, our teenage son/daughter should remember all the hard work done in preparation for the exam. Imagine opening the results and celebrating the fact the results reflect the hard work and commitment invested so far.

You can find more details on this topic at Suite101: **How to Survive Exam Stress: Family Survival Guide for Better Exam**

<http://www.suite101.com/content/how-to-survive-exam-stress-a173298#ixzz10dgfPMxO>

I hope you find this tip useful to help us provide the support our children need through the next few weeks.

Yours sincerely



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Chairman

Parents' Support Group (MSL PiE)